


TESTS USED TO DIAGNOSE COVID-19



DIAGNOSTIC TESTS CONFIRMS CURRENT COVID-19 INFECTION			ANTIBODY TEST PREVIOUS COVID-19 INFECTION	
	GENETIC		ANTIGEN	SEROLOGY OR BLOOD TEST
	RT – PCR*	NAAT		
What is being tested?	RNA or viral genetic material		Specific proteins on the surface of the virus	Antibodies created after fighting a previous infection
How is the sample collected?	Nasal or throat swab Saliva sample		Nasal or throat swab	Finger stick or blood draw
What does it show?	Active infection		Active infection <i>More likely to miss an active infection</i>	Past infection
How long for results?	Same-day or up to a week <i>*Some tests are rapid</i>		Rapid (Less than 1 hour)	<i>Same-day or 1 – 3 days</i> <i>*Some tests are rapid</i>
How accurate or reliable?	Highly Accurate Most cases will not need a retest		Positive results are usually highly accurate, but false positives can happen Negative results may need a molecular test to confirm	Sometimes a second antibody test is needed Antibodies are usually undetectable after 2-3 months
When should you get it?	If you have symptoms or believe you had exposure to someone with COVID-19 Travel to some states and countries		If you have symptoms or believe you had exposure to someone with COVID-19	If you believe you have had a COVID-19 infection in the last 3 months

*RT-PCR is the gold standard for COVID-19 testing

WHAT TO DO AFTER TESTING?

Positive Molecular Test Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay home and separate yourself from others in the home. Treat your symptoms with over the counter medicine. Always remember to wear a mask (even around others in the home) and wash your hands frequently If you have chronic medical conditions, including diabetes or are overweight, let your doctor know. If you have a medical emergency, call 911 or go to an ER medicine. Always remember to wear a mask (even around others in the home) and wash your hands frequently Let your close contacts know they should quarantine and get tested. Work with the public health department if they contact you to learn more about your situation
Negative Molecular Diagnostic Test Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay home as much as possible. If you feel sick, get tested again Practice good hygiene, wash your hands, cover coughs and sneezes Wear a mask and social distance in public settings Wear a mask and social distance if you live with someone who is sick with COVID -19
Negative Antigen Results	A doctor may order a molecular test if your results are negative, but you still have symptoms of COVID-19. Continue social distancing, mask use when in public, and frequent handwashing
Positive or Confirmed Antibody Tests	Doctors do not know if the presence of COVID-19 antibodies offer immunity or protection from future COVID-19 infection. Follow the same guidance listed in "Negative Molecular Diagnostic Test Results"



Source: [Coronavirus Testing Basics FDA.gov](https://www.fda.gov/coronavirus-testing-basics)